

3 with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of groups.

1 19. The schedule management system according to Claim 15, wherein a degree of  
2 significance is provided to said participants respectively so that schedules of said participants  
3 are grouped in the order of said degree of significance to thereby produce the idle time  
4 corresponding to said degree of significance.

1 20. The schedule management system according to Claim 15, wherein said  
2 schedule server comprises databases which store schedules of participants and schedules of  
3 equipments reserved by ones of said participants, and a multistageous idle time retrieval unit  
4 which divides schedules registered for participants and equipments into a plurality of groups  
5 and retrieves an idle time common from one group as a retrieval condition for retrieving an  
6 idle time common for another group of said plurality of groups.--

#### REMARKS

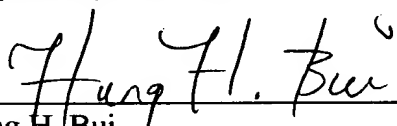
Claims 15-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1-14 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer while claims 15-20 have been newly added in accordance with current Office policy, to further and alternatively define Applicants' disclosed invention and to assist the Examiner to expedite compact prosecution of the instant application. No fee is incurred by the addition of these claims.

In view of the foregoing additions and remarks, all claims are deemed in condition for examination. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' attorney at (703) 312-6600.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all claims are deemed to be in condition for examination. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' attorney at (703) 312-6600.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (500.35669X00).

Respectfully submitted,

  
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